

LANDSCAPE PLANS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF
A LARGE AMERICAN ESTATE IN THE ENGLISH STYLE

by

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INTRODUCTION

The aim of the designer in developing a thesis of this kind was to determine the advisability of applying the English style of landscape architecture to localities of the central states that have climatic and soil conditions similar to those at Manhattan, Kansas. An estate was chosen because it requires the consideration of soil, plant life and architectural adaptations more closely than other landscape problems.

The designer had neither financial nor structural limitations in developing of the plans. The only limitations were that all features must be in their proper relations from both utilitarian and aesthetic standpoints. A development similar to this, no doubt, would seem extravagant under present conditions in Kansas. Although the problem was purely hypothetical it was made as practical as possible by using an accurate topographic map and by observing the soil and the plant life of the region.

GENERAL METHOD

A successful landscape development is based on the choice of some definite style. After studying the various styles of landscape architecture, it was thought that the English style would better adapt itself to Kansas conditions than would any of the other styles.

It became necessary to make certain assumptions and to select a plot of ground that would best meet the needs of the average owner of a large estate. Some of the things thought important to consider in selecting a plot of ground are: (1) The vistas from the estate over the surrounding country; (2) the topography of the ground, the importance of which is proper drainage, design requirements, and natural beauty; (3) soil, important for the luxuriant construction; (4) a plot of the proper size and shape.

With the foregoing requirements in mind, a plot of ground that borders Manhattan on the west was selected. It joins Sunset cemetery on the north and northwest. This tract contains sixth-eight acres and a topographic map was available from the city. The portion of the ground surrounding the house and garden area is slightly rolling and

overlooks three river valleys, from which the estate was named. The soil is of good fertility and the surface is rolling enough for proper drainage and possesses great possibilities for landscape design. The total difference in elevation on the property is about one hundred thirty-two feet. The ravines are heavily wooded with native trees and shrubs.

Several studies were made to determine the best location of the house and the relation of the house to the estate, the gardens, drives, service areas and the vistas over the surrounding country.

From the preliminary sketches a general plan was drawn to a scale one inch equals fifty feet as shown in Plate I. It shows the relation of the various features of the whole estate. This plan was transferred to Paragon pebble grain paper, inked, and rendered in water color.

The area of about five acres surrounding the house and gardens was next enlarged to a scale of one inch equals twenty feet. The drawing at this scale makes it easier to show the landscape development of the area. The drawing was also transferred to Paragon pebble grain paper and rendered in water color. This development is shown in Plate II.

The planting and grading plan of the house and garden area was drawn in ink on tracing cloth to a scale one inch equals twenty feet. A photograph of the plan may be seen in Plate III. A large variety of shrubs and deciduous and evergreen trees are shown on the planting plan. The key to the planting beds is located in the left hand corner of the plan. All plant materials used are hardy and otherwise adapted to use on a large estate in this section of the country.

SUMMARY

The designer was put to the test to include as many landscape features as seemed practical and still keep everything in its proper relation to each and every other thing. The author is convinced that by making a few substitutions of construction materials and plants that are adapted to Kansas for those used in England and by making a few slight changes in architectural features, the English style of landscape architecture is far superior to other styles for Kansas conditions, and should be used more extensively.

Plate I

The General Plan showing the landscape development and the topography of the entire estate. The contours are at five foot intervals and are numbered. The original plan was drawn to a scale one inch equals fifty feet on Paragon pebble grain paper, and rendered in water colors. The legend system of labeling buildings was used. The letter near the various buildings or areas refers to a key which gives the name of the feature. This key is found in the title corner of the plan. The score card for the golf course is also found in the title area.

Plate II

Plate II is a design of house and garden area. This plan was drawn on Paragon pebble grain paper, inked and rendered in water color. It was drawn to a scale one inch equals twenty feet. The first floor plan of the house, floor plan of the garage, greenhouse, garden house and the bath house are also shown. Section A - B shows the view along the major axis of the house and garden. The difference in elevation of the plants and the gardens is shown.

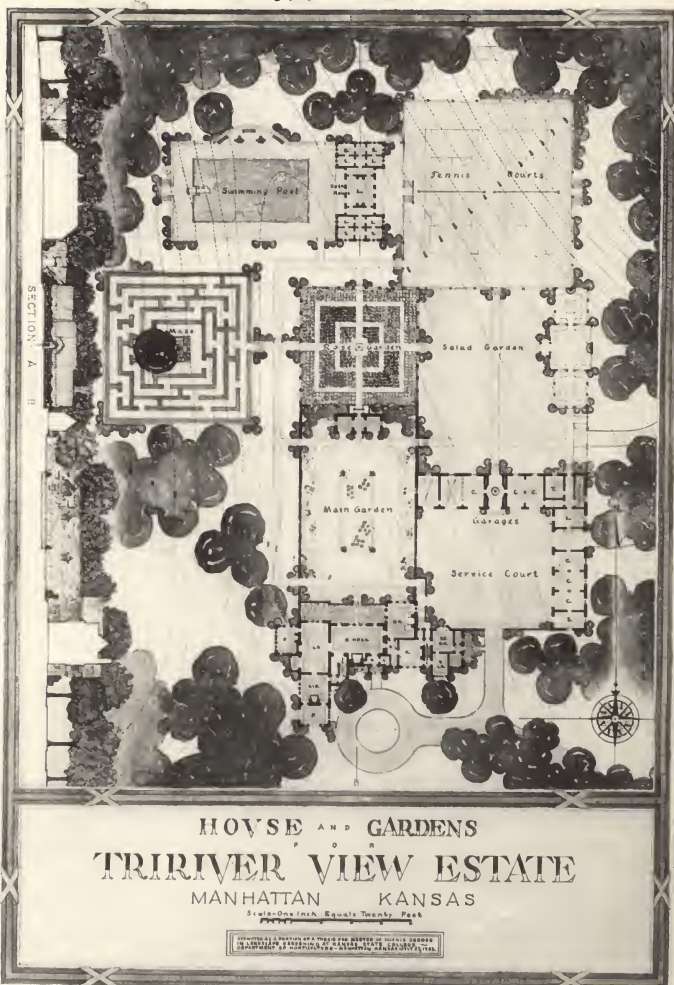
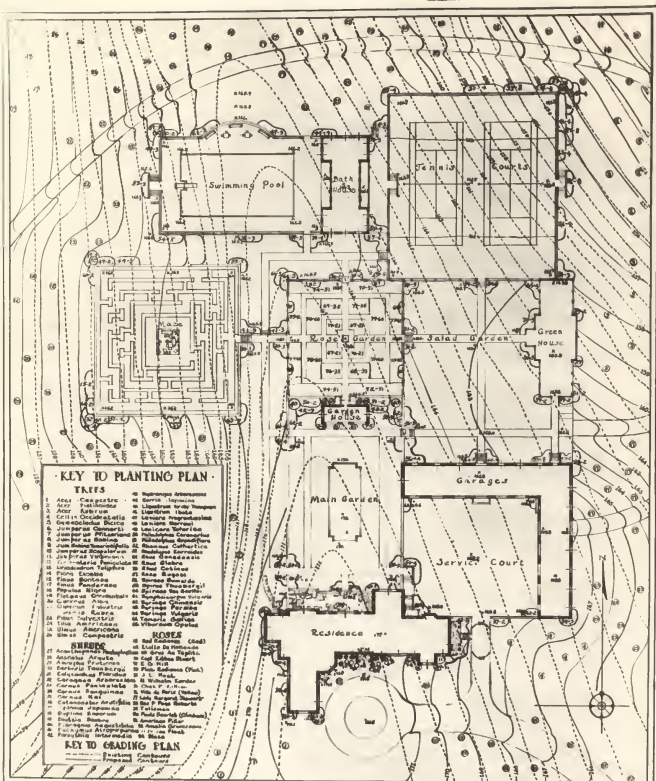


Plate III

Plate III is a combination planting and grading plan for the area surrounding the house and gardens. The plan from which Plate III was made was drawn on tracing cloth in ink to a scale one inch equals twenty feet.

The planting plan uses the key system of labeling the planting beds. The key to which the numbers refer is shown in the lower left corner of this plan. The first number in the bed refers to the kind of plants used and the second indicates the number of plants needed. The small circle indicates the location of the trees to be planted.

The grading plan shows contours at one foot intervals which are numbered. The existing contours are shown by a broken line and the proposed change of contour is shown by a solid line. The elevation of important points is given on the plan.



PLANTING AND GRADING PLAN TRIRIVER VIEW ESTATE MANHATTAN — KANSAS

Scale: One Inch = Twenty Feet

DESIGNED BY A. H. HARRIS, ARCHT. IN CHARGE, BUREAU OF LANDSCAPE ARCHT. AT MANHATTAN STATE COLLEGE, MANHATTAN, KANSAS. PHOTOGRAPH BY J. H. HARRIS, MANHATTAN, KANSAS.

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